

BARG Newsletter May 2026

***Ballarat Amateur Radio Group Inc. #6953T
May 2026 Monthly Newsletter***

***Next Meeting
11:00AM Saturday 30th May 2026
At the Airport - All Welcome***



Contacting us
BARG@BARG.ORG.AU

We're on the web.

www.barg.org.au

https://twitter.com/vk3_barg

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/VK3BML/>



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Front Page; VK3RPT Repeater Site. (Colin NCC, Peter APW, John JF, David KQT and Andy TOT)

Times and dates of nets as below

Club Nets: VHF NET: Every Tuesday Night at 8 pm on 146.750 MHz - VK3RBA

HF NET: Every Thursday Night at 8 pm on 3.608 MHz - VK3BML

6m NET: Every Tuesday Night at 8:30 pm on 53.650Mhz RX / 52.650Mhz TX - FM with a 91.5 tone - VK3RWU

LINKED REPEATERS: *The local VK3RBA-70cm repeater on Mt Buninyong is part of a network of linked repeaters covering North-Western Victoria.*

Access details for this repeater have recently changed.

For full details of this linked network and access details

see <https://www.grz.com/lookup/vk3rba>

You can listen to the system live <http://vk3rba.dyndns.org:441/>

This linked system may be accessed via IRLP node 9503

BARG inc. OFFICE BEARERS

President	Vacant	Ordinary Member	Tom George VK3DMK
Vice President	Colin Consiglio VK3NCC	Ordinary Member	Ian Fairweather VK3YFD
Secretary	Peter Westgarth VK3APW	Ordinary Member	Doug Ellery VK3DRE
Treasurer	Jeff Rickerby VK3JHR	Ordinary Member	David Martin VK3KQT
Ordinary Member	Craig Cook VK3KG	Ordinary Member	Ben Daniel VK3NRD



The VP's Ramblings



Greetings everyone,

The highlight for BARG this month's report has to be the successful culmination of the VK3RBT revitalization project.

On the 26th of April, VK3RBT started operating and serving the Ballarat again. This was after an extended time operating at much reduced capacity. All hats off, sincere thanks and three cheers for our secretary Peter/VK3APW who led the project and effected much of the required technical work. There were many hands contributing effort at various times and very thankful donations of equipment and time as well. There should be a full article in the BARG News detailing the activities.

Our next General Meeting will be Saturday the 30th of May, 11AM at the club rooms. In recent times we've been honoured to have members and people who have been very active in the past attend General meetings (and coffee mornings) and reestablish contact. If you haven't attended for a while, perhaps this meeting is one you could make it to. This month we hope to hold the time honoured "George Fowler" auction immediately after the general meeting.

See https://www.barg.org.au/?page_id=102 for the general writeup. Expect the BBQ to be going on the day.

Peter/PWG is planning a presentation on FreeDV at this general meeting, bring your notebooks along and prepare to be amazed with the possibilities of Digital Voice.

Always keep your eye on the club email list for general chatter and important notices. Remember membership subscriptions typically expire at the end of June, so we will be sending notices out regarding this. You wouldn't want to miss out.. If you are not receiving, emails please let one of the committee members know or send an email to BARG@BARG.ORG.AU

Did you take advantage of the BARG Dining night this month? Ask someone who went what you missed out on.

What about the Thursday coffee morning gatherings at the club rooms? A couple of hours of good company and solving some of the world's problems.

Goal for 2026 -- Consider inviting someone who normally wouldn't attend to come along for a meeting.

Thought for the month: The 2m and 80m weekly nets are a great way keep contact with other members as well as other regular check-ins. Your investment of 30 minutes is worthwhile, pop up and say hello, especially if you haven't been able to make recent meetings.

Room for another thought? The BARG sponsored repeater VK3RBT is back on air and serving Ballarat and environs. 146.650, -0.6MHz offset 91.5Hz tone. Grab your VHF capable device and give a shout out. At least set it up and listen. Normal Tuesday 2m Net will continue on VK3RBA until further notice. I'm also very interested in ideas on how we can make good use of this great resource. What about another short net, different day, different time, during the day, perhaps focussed on a specific topic, just a catch up over "coffee/tea" time.. grab your trusty handheld, wander about the Ballarat CBD and environs, and give a shout and make some noise.

My continued thanks to the committee and members who keep things ticking over.
Stay well, stay warm,
Cheers, 73, Colin vk3ncc



The next BARG General Meeting 11:00AM Saturday 30th May 2026

Followed by the George Fowler Memorial Auction

FreeDV

FreeDV activities continue 80m after the BARG 80m Net.

The 80m net is every Thursday Night at 8 pm on 3.608 MHz - VK3BML

<https://vu3dxr.in/getting-started-with-freedv-a-beginners-guide-to-digital-voice-on-amateur-radio>



BARG Thursday Morning Coffee Club

***Commences at 10:00AM at the BARG Club
Rooms every Thursday.
Ballarat Airport - All Welcome.***



JUNE 7th 2026

Mount Gambier SA

**SERG Annual Convention & Dinner – Sun 7th, plus the
Australian Fox-Hunt Championship Sat 6th & Sun 7th**

Scout Hall, 3 Margaret St.



- ★ Huge trade displays
- ★ used equipment tables
- ★ home-brew competition
- ★ door prizes, raffles.

www.serg.org.au

Email bookings to - convention@serg.org.au



Here we are again! Back at the traditional time of the year we get together and share our prized, long held items that have sat in the darkest reaches of our Shacks for too long.

It's time to bid Adieu to those wonderful Pearls and offer them to a new home.

SATURDAY 30TH MAY AT THE BARG CLUB ROOMS

25 Boomerang Avenue Mitchell Park (Google Maps show the new Airport road access)

Quick monthly meeting at 11am and Barbecue from Midday

The George Fowler Memorial Auction starts at 1pm

Items can be sold with proceeds donated to BARG... OR

Selling on Commission? Want a Reserve? Negotiate before the Auction starts!

Don't forget to bring along a pocket full of cash.

REMEMBER ONE IMPORTANT THING:



We are not a local Tip so you'll be asked to take any unsold items back home

SEE YA THERE!

*** Happy Birthday *** aka The VK3RBT 2026 rebirth

Compiled by Peter/VK3APW, Colin/VK3NCC

Well not really a birthday, but a re-birthday ... or more accurately a reinstall day.

It was Wednesday the 29th of April 2026 that saw a convoy of 3 vehicles heading from the club rooms towards Green Hill, the site of the BARG's VK3RBT installation.

But that's starting at the wrong end of the story.... Let's go back to the beginning.

In early 2024 a curious eye fell upon the club's repeater. It wasn't performing well and was feeling very lonely because of minimal use.

An onsite inspection and analysis showed less than 180mW output (original design was 25W) and the duplexer was in very bad physical shape. Although the duplexer was very well built initially, time and the elements had rendered it unserviceable.

*(note to readers, *DO NOT* install radio gear directly under a louver window)*

Even though some remedial work was attempted and did improve the operation slightly the overall results were not promising. We had two options, abandon the repeater and give up the licenses or revitalize.

A full club online survey in April 2024 asking the question: *"Should BARG keep the 2m Repeater we own?"* Resulted in a 96% response of "yes"

The result of that survey was taken to a full club general meeting and after an exciting and wholesome discussion the meeting unanimously passed a motion to *" purchase equipment to the value of no more than \$5000"*. That formally set the wheels in motion for equipment procurement.

Peter/VK3APW, having quite a few years of professional commercial repeater and radio installation, stepped into the breach.

First step was to identify a suitable duplexer; two local manufacturers/suppliers were identified. The first was not a hard quote rather than an estimate, of >\$8K.

The second was a firm quote of \$2,879.84, not including delivery.





The website and brochure were reviewed and after consulting with the manufacturer, the advertised device was considered suitable and ordered. Not trusting the standard delivery options, Peter/APW drove to LINDENOW and collected.

Upon test, the rack mountable 4-cavity pass-reject duplexer provided did not meet the Rx-Tx isolation specification of the spec sheet delivered with the device. The duplexer was repacked and sent back to the manufacturer at their cost. It was returned about a week later and was slightly better by a dB and a half. Discussions with the manufacturer were disappointingly inconclusive. It was discovered that at least 20dB more isolation in both directions was needed to even have a chance of the repeater working.

To try and achieve the required degree of isolation, we could order a replacement six pot duplexer which on paper only scrapped in. This would result in substantial cost to the club. After David KQT and Peter APW analyzed and discussed the specifications required, it was decided to try and 'fix' the one we had.

Several configurations were tried after donations of cavities by Andrew/VK3TOT, David/VK3KQT and Peter/VK3APW. Peter/VK3APW then carried out the work required to have all devices configured appropriately. The final configuration saw 3 notch filters in the TX leg, along with a ferrite coupler, making total insertion loss of 3dB. The RX leg has 2 vari-notches and two six-inch band-pass filters, with a total insertion loss of 4dB. Antenna has a modest gain of 2dB.

This has an isolation of RX to TX, at slightly over 100dB.

Meanwhile, a suitable repeater was selected, being a Yaesu DR-2X. The ever helpful Strictly Ham offered the club a very good price, so the order was placed. Unfortunately, the order took quite some months to fill, due to component shortages in Japan. The original price was honored, even though a price rise had occurred before delivery. Thanks again to Strictly Ham.

To power the repeater a Yaesu FP-1030A was purchased from VK Radio, at a good price.

Some of the details of the build:

- A standard 19" lockable rack was donated by: Andrew TOT
- 2 folded dipoles (Base antenna) donated by Andrew TOT
- Installation and cabling of the 2 folded dipoles and extending the tower pole by Andrew. Assisted by Ian YFD
- Mods/additions to duplexer David KQT, Peter APW
- Repurposing internals of 19-inch rack Peter APW
- Internal cabling of the Rack, Peter APW
- Installation of cooling fans. Peter APW
- Design and installation of heat detection devices to control cooling fans. Peter APW
- Design and installation of rodent proofing solution to the cabinet rack. Peter APW
- Programming of the repeater Peter APW
- Transport to Green Hill Colin NCC, John JF, David KQT and Peter APW

The Repeater had to be stripped right down for transport and reassembled on site.

Upon installation at Greenhill, final measurements

- SWR 1:1
- RF power output 25W

Financial expenditure came in under budget, but we must not forget the many untold hours of voluntary work from Peter VK3APW supported by club membership.

The only items re-used for the new repeater, are the shed and the tower... everything else has been replaced. Hopefully this device will enjoy a long working life.

Now over to the membership and local Amateur Radio operators to make full use of this repeater. Get out there and make some noise!



VK3RBT, Green Hill, 146.650MHz
-0.6MHz offset 91.5Hz tone.



Welz Meter PEP Board

Contributor Robert VK3ARM

An Amateur friend who became Silent Key some years ago designed a nifty PEP circuit that I installed into my Welz SP-350 200-watt meter. What made this good is that it is a proper, powered circuit.

Stupid thing is, the Welz meter was locked up in the bowels of my bits cupboard for years and I completely forgot that I still had it when Peter (VK3APW) pointed me to a Kenwood 200-watt PEP meter on VK Classifieds. Just recently found the old Welz meter.

Oh dear.....

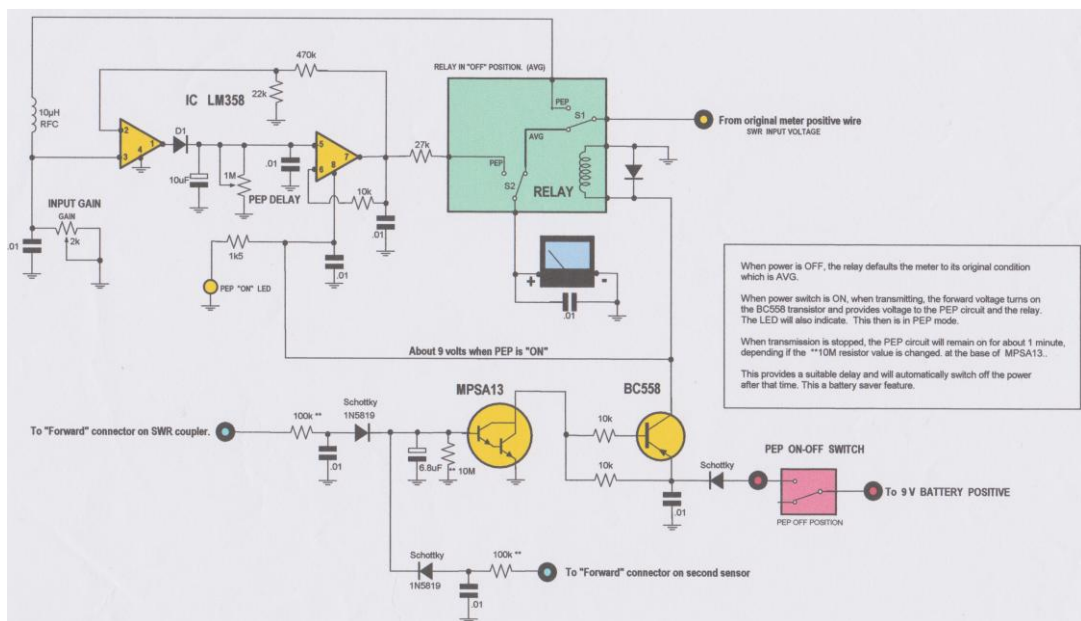
Big advantage is that it can be calibrated to give more accurate measurements and it works way faster and more reliably than those simple passive circuits in cheap-ish meters that just charge up after a few syllables and provide a vague assemblance of what the actual power is.

This is my Welz meter. With the rear mounted switch ON it measures peak envelope power. When OFF it measures average power. The front mounted LED lights when the PEP board comes to life.

The circuit has a timer that switches off power to the board after a set time. Fortunately it was switched off when I found the meter, otherwise I might have had some very leaky batteries.

The circuit diagram is shown below. If anyone wants an A4 PDF copy let me know and I'll send it to you.

I certainly didn't design the circuit. I built it with assistance from my SK Amateur mate and installed it into my then 20-year-old Welz meter.

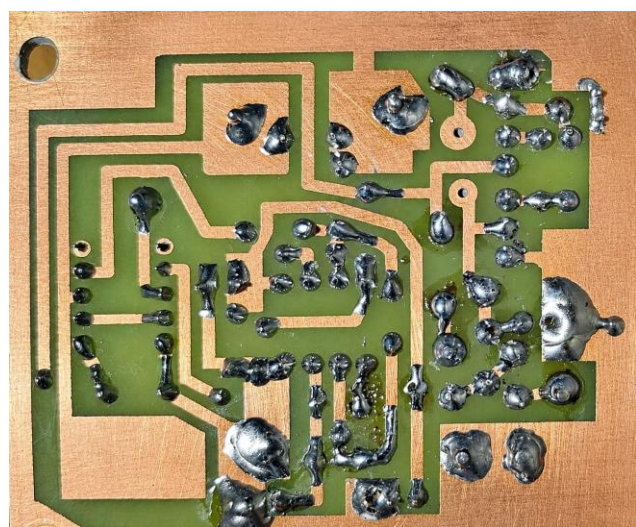
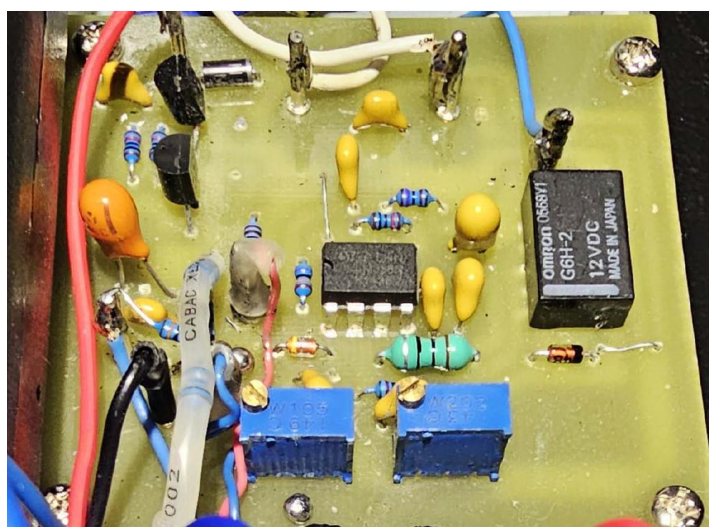


You could use a 9-volt battery, but I had the six battery AA holder available so my meter has six Alkaline AA batteries. Gives me better life. Meter sprung into life after I dug it out. I've now replaced all the batteries and put the date underneath the meter with a permanent marker.

Here are the internals of the meter:



And a close-up of the PEP board:



The board measures 65mm square. The tracks and soldering looked tidy till I magnified into them:

If you're interested in turning an average meter into a good PEP meter, consider giving this a go.

You'll need to design your own board.

What do you think?

Maybe someone could check the accuracy of my meter if I brought it down sometime (grovel to Peter perhaps).

Cheers... Robert VK3ARM

The Serial Number Era: Is Ham Radio Losing its Voice?

Contributor Josh VK3JGA

Personal Roots and the Spark of Curiosity

The journey into amateur radio often begins with a simple need to connect. For me, this started in high school with CB radio, a cost-effective gateway to communicate with friends. What begins as local chatter frequently evolves into a deeper passion for the mechanics of long-distance communication. The realization that one can bounce signals off the moon, speak to the International Space Station (ISS), or reach across the globe transforms a casual hobby into a lifelong pursuit.

Mentorship plays a pivotal role in this evolution. Learning from seasoned operators like VK3DBF, VK3VFO and VK3MVT, who could listen across continents, and experiencing first-hand the thrill of being "tracked down" on UHF much like a fox hunt... highlighted the technical mystery and excitement that defines the craft for me. These early experiences with gear and the "magic" of the airwaves cement a curiosity about how the world connects.

The Return to the Airwaves

Life transitions often lead to a hiatus from the hobby. For me, financial constraints and the lack of a permanent residence made it difficult to maintain a station or a license. However, as I'm now returning to the hobby later in life, it brings a renewed perspective. Firing up a trusty IC718 in a quiet, rural setting reveals the beauty of a low-noise floor, providing a stark contrast to the interference found in urban centres. It is this return to the "sticks" that often prompts a reflection on the current state of the hobby. Low noise floor, but also low usage?

The Numbers: A Growing, But Aging, Population

Amateur radio is currently navigating a profound transformation. While the hobby appears to be thriving numerically, the nature of interaction is shifting. In Australia, the transition to the Class License model has eliminated annual renewal fees, resulting in a surge of lifetime operators. In the United States, the FCC reports over 748,000 active licensees.

Region	Total Licensed (Est. 2026)	Growth Trend	Average Age
Australia (VK)	~15,500	Stable/Up	65 - 68
United States	~748,500	Growing (+1% YoY)	68
Global	~3,000,000	Growing	65+

The Rise of the Machine

The rise of automated digital modes, specifically FT8, has fundamentally altered the HF landscape. Digital modes are projected to account for over 50% of global activity in 2026. While these modes allow for rapid-fire "contacts," they often lack the personal exchange of names, stories, and friendships. To me, there is something inherently unsettling about a radio with a microphone that never gets used. Where the human voice breaking through the static is replaced by software macros and "pings." There is always something so exciting about hearing that faint sound of a voice through the static, so whilst ham is still here, it is shifting toward a streamlined pursuit of digital data exchanges. The "heartbeat" of the hobby increasingly resembles the pulse of a modem rather than the cadence of a human voice

The Survival Paradox

While some fear a future where we are more connected by data but more isolated by silence, this digital evolution is also a tool for survival. In noise congested urban environments where solar inverters and electronics create high QRM, digital modes can penetrate interference that would render voice communication impossible. Amateur radio is evolving into an automated science. It is more efficient and has more users than ever, but the social art of the "ragchew" is becoming a rarity. The person on the other end may increasingly be replaced by software and a serial number, but the hobby remains a resilient pursuit of connection.

My Personal Opinion.

This was part of a chat between friends I decided to write about. I'll be honest, I know very little about digital modes. The last digital mode I knew of was RTTY. Coming back, reading up, researching about what I've missed over the last 9 years excites me, and now, also kind of scares me. I love that the hobby survives, however... I feel that whilst ham radio isn't dead, it's losing its voice, and to me, that's almost just as sad. When was the last time you really got excited? Further to that, what makes you excited on ham radio?

So, what's your opinion? Am I alone in these feelings and observations? It would be very interesting and valuable to hear from other members.....

Key References (2024-2026)

- ACMA: Amateur Radio Class Licence Transition Report
- WIA: Australian Amateur Radio Band Plan Revision 2026-1
- FCC: Amateur Radio License Totals & Trends
- PSK Reporter: Real-time Digital Mode Activity Statistics
- QSL.net: Demographic Study of Global Operators

VK Summit Report

Contributor Peter VK3PWG

As some of you may be aware, the VK Summit was recently held in Albury, in parallel with the WIA AGM. Promoted as the largest radio exhibition of its kind in Australia, the event was free to attend (with registration required), with a paid dinner option.

Although I'm not usually one for AGMs, when Malcolm (VK3OAK) asked if I was going, I decided to look into it—and thought, "why not?" I registered straight away, and before long Malcolm had booked accommodation, so we were committed.

On the way up, we activated a couple of parks using Malcolm's FT-897 and EFHW antenna. We logged 46 contacts at the first park and 37 at the second before pushing on to Albury. After checking into our cabin, we caught up with



others over dinner at the Brew House, then headed to the Commercial Club to get our bearings for the weekend.

Saturday started early, helping the VKFF team set up their display. The venue was impressive—spacious, well laid out, with a dedicated area for “tech talks.” Presentations ran hourly across both days while attendees explored exhibits and socialised. Initially, we expected people to drop in briefly, but the strong attendance throughout the day showed just how engaging the event was.



Highlights included several live presentations from across the Pacific. The WIA AGM was held in a separate room and was also well attended (Malcolm went—I opted to explore the exhibits). Attendees could freely move between sessions, choosing topics of interest.

Saturday evening featured a dinner followed by a live presentation from Adrian (KO8SCA), a team leader from the Bouvet Island DXpedition—a massive project taking three years and \$1.7 million to complete. Later, an ARISS contact allowed a Scout group to speak directly with an astronaut aboard the ISS—an impressive and memorable experience. Sunday continued with more high-quality presentations. A standout for FlexRadio enthusiasts was a live session from Canada showcasing the Aurora 500W transceiver, including insights into its design and operation. The unit, along with other models, was on display—an all-in-one solution for those with a generous budget!

The event wrapped up around lunchtime. Malcolm and I had planned to activate a few more parks on the way home, but torrential rain put an end to that idea.

Overall, this was easily the best radio event we've attended. If you missed it, you truly missed a fantastic weekend. The variety of presentations—from Icom, FlexRadio, and Mad Dog Coils through to topics like ADS-B, ARDF, ARISS, LoRa, and APRS—was outstanding and far too extensive to cover fully here.



For more information, visit: <https://www.vksummit.au/>

From the Yeovil Amateur Radio Club Facebook

Mary Micklewright

..

From Rob Micklewright G3MYM

At the end of December 1925, just over a century ago, Loren Windom W8GZ (of Windom aerial fame) had a QSO with a radio amateur in Adelaide, Australia.

Loren Windom was in Columbus, Ohio, USA, and thus the distance over which the QSO took place was about 10,148 miles.

What was so incredible about this QSO was that Loren Windom was only using a transmitter output power of about 74 milliwatts, and thus the QSO had a miles per root watt figure of 37,305, which was about two and a half times greater than the miles per root watt figure of the first transatlantic transistor transmitter QSO, which took place in 1956.

(A miles per root watt figure is a simplified way of comparing QSOs. The higher the miles per root watt figure, the more outstanding is the QSO.

See my post on here dated 22 October 2024.

The first transatlantic transistor transmitter QSO was over a distance of about 3,656 miles, The transmitter output power of about 58 milliwatts, and was thus a miles per root watt figure of 15,181.)

However, Loren Windom's incredible December 1925 QRPp QSO was not an isolated event, because in January 1926, Loren Windom was using a transmitter output power of about 66 milliwatts, when he had a QSO with a radio amateur in Cape Town, South Africa, about 8,219 miles from Columbus, Ohio.

Then, at the end of February 1926, Loren Windom was using a transmitter output power of about 52 milliwatts, when he had a QSO with a radio amateur in Wellington, New Zealand, 8,502 miles from Columbus, Ohio.

Unfortunately, it is unlikely that these outstanding QRPp QSOs could be repeated today, because today, the dominant radio noise, against which a received radio signal has to compete to be heard, is man-made radio noise, which nowadays is many times greater than atmospheric radio noise, which was the dominant radio noise a century ago, when the above QRPp QSOs took place.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1844789352441533>

International QRP Day 2026 17th June 2026

Contributors Tom George VK3DMK and Max chatGPT

Every year on the 17th of June, amateur radio operators around the world celebrate International QRP Day — a relaxed but highly respected operating activity devoted to the art of low-power communication. For many operators, QRP represents the purest form of amateur radio: achieving reliable communication using modest equipment, efficient antennas, operating skill, and a healthy respect for propagation.

The Basics, what is QRP?

The term QRP comes from the old Morse abbreviation meaning “reduce power.” In amateur radio, QRP generally refers to operating with five watts output or less on CW and digital modes, or around ten watts PEP on SSB. While those power levels may sound tiny

compared with the 100-watt transceivers commonly found in today's shacks, experienced QRP operators regularly work stations thousands of kilometres away.

Why Operators Enjoy QRP

Efficiency matters. A well-designed antenna often outperforms brute-force transmitter power.

Operating skill improves. QRP operators quickly learn to understand propagation, timing, and noise conditions.

Portable operation becomes practical. Small batteries and lightweight radios make field operation easy and enjoyable.

Homebrew equipment thrives. Many QRP enthusiasts build their own transceivers, tuners, antennas, and accessories.

There is genuine satisfaction in achieving difficult contacts. Anyone can work DX with a kilowatt amplifier. Working DX on three watts and a dipole is another story entirely.

Typical QRP Frequencies

Band	CW	SSB
80m	3560 kHz	3690 kHz
40m	7030 kHz	7090 kHz
20m	14060 kHz	14285 kHz
15m	21060 kHz	21385 kHz
10m	28060 kHz	28360 kHz

These frequencies are not exclusive, but they are commonly used meeting points for QRP activity and are worth monitoring during International QRP Day.

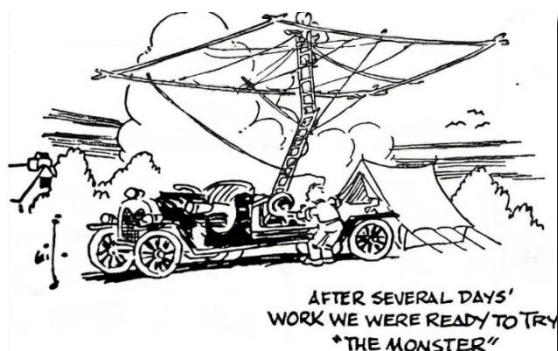
Propagation Prospects for VK Operators

Mid-June conditions are often favourable for VK operators, particularly on 20 metres during daylight hours. Forty metres usually becomes productive after sunset, especially for regional contacts and paths into Asia. With Solar Cycle 25 still providing useful HF conditions, there is every chance of working Europe or North America using surprisingly modest equipment.

For Victorian operators, early morning greyline conditions can occasionally produce excellent long-distance opportunities. Even simple antennas can deliver impressive results when propagation cooperates.

A Challenge Worth Trying

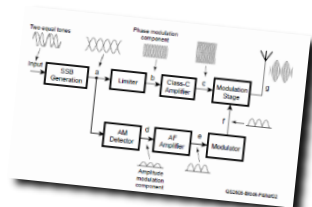
International QRP Day is an ideal excuse to experiment. Try reducing transmitter power, operating portable from a local park, or dusting off that homebrew project that has been waiting patiently on the workbench. Many operators discover that lower power operation is far more enjoyable and rewarding than they expected.



Magazine Reviews

QST Review May 2026

- P9 Second Century, Now we should be building a club membership. Nothing new but how do others do it. Some ideas, www.arrl.org/marconi-program see also another way to offer a project to new members, www.arrl.org/arrl-dual-band-2-m-70-cm-handheld-yagi-antenna An idea for BARG to consider.
- P13 Club spotlight Bella Vista Radio club in Arkansas N5BVA Founded in 1993 they currently have 325 members. And meet monthly. See www.youtube.com/@BellaVistaRadioClub
- P24 Letters. QSLing is still alive, Digital is CW still and new 60M band in the USA.
- P30 A three-part series explaining receiver dynamics range measurements as done by the ARRL Laboratory.
- P33 Polar Modulation.? Did you know about this extra method of modulation. When Class E amplification was Introduced the author wondered if SSB could be introduced and increase the efficiency.
- P37 Station set up Techniques to prevent Field Day RFI.
- P41 Review. Icom IC-PW2 solid state Linear .160 to 6M linear PA. offers 1KW power output on all Modes utilising a detachable control panel and matches the size of the IC-7760 radio. See QST for April 2026 It has an inbuilt automatic ATU with inputs from six antennas and allowing two radios to be attached. Running QSK for CW Icom offers software for remote control over Internet. This is only avail from Microsoft Store. Noticed by the reviewer as having FIVE fans which switch up at different times and levels or speeds with a noticeable sound level increase and a desire to place the headphones on. With its 10-foot remote cable operating point of the control box is movable. Unit comes with three different cables to fit only ICOM units. Power input is 180-264V AC with full KW output. Test results by the ARRL Lab are in the article and the price id US\$5,500 from ICOM. See the web site www.icomamerica.com
- P47 SPOOLTENNA end fed portable antennas. Here is a wire ant folded up in an old, spooled device [EFHW4010-----MODEL. Used as an end fed for 40M to 10M. see www.spooltenna.com Device comes with 25feet of coaxial cable [RG-316 with ferrites and two ends of BNC connectors. Costing around USD149 and able to direct an impedance of 50R A good report is given, WWW.spooltenna.co



P49 QSL cards, they seem to have died away these days but amateurs always sent a card after a contact as it was the done thing and also allows the recipient to use your card as their confirmation that a two-way contact had been made. Many amateurs would display their more exotic or rare countries and use them to show others of their conquests. I remember entering many shacks to see the owner had "papered the shack wall" with cards as a sort of "bragg" to visitors. Many had good, coloured pictures printed and the stamps always appealed to the Numismatic among the fraternity. Now we do have a paper based QSL system if people want to QSL exchange, but I would guess the traditions of the old timers hasn't rubbed off onto the newcomers. With the computer now we can make our own card and one program is the QSO-CARD CREATOR app.



www.qrz.com

P51 DX look free web-based Application. <https://dxlook.com> An interesting site if you wish to peruse the bands to see what is open and working now, aggregates some details such as POTA, Reverse Beacon sites, DX Clusters, SOTA, APRSWSP net. DX Look then combines all data onto a map face which then includes reports of Clusters, MUF, VOACAP. This App covers bands from 160 to 150MHz with complete spectrum coverages, Multi linguistics are built in. Band conditions are also covered wrt magnetic storms and located around your QTH, Made by DXLOOK it is available free.



Although the developer would appreciate some recompense for their work. See <https://dxlook.com>.

P53 Ask Dave. FSK versus AFSK, Old Coax should I use it? And how do I tackle an antenna if under a Housing Order restriction.?

P55 Hints and Hacks look at remote operation and using a small TV camera for operation. And setting up and checking Po and SWR while still up a tower and adjusting while observing the shack instrumentations.

P67 ARRL has an insurance plan for equipment. Should you have one to.? What is your shack and equipment worth.? Is your expensive gear listed on the home policy with a value or will replacement be included after all other listed items are paid out.

P73 ARRL Field day 2026. June 27 – Sunday 28 June,
ARRL CW Sweep stakes. November 7-9.
ARRL International EME contest. 2,2GHz and up 8-9 August & 5-6 Sept 2026.
ARRL 50-1296 MHz 31 Oct-1 Nov 2026, and 28-29 November 2026,
ARRL International Digital Contest. Sat 6 June-7 June 2026
ARRL June VHF Contest. Sat 13 – Mon 15 June 2026.
Kids day the third Sat in June. 20 June 2026
See the conditions for all the above on pages 73 -79.

P83 Ham Media Playlist POTA. Tim Davis NW9F
see <https://tinyurl.com/grayman-victory>

P85 How's DX. Looks back through the years. FO/M Marquesas Island and others. 3DR Fiji, IOTA AS-169 Arnala Is, IOTA SA-093 Tutumate Is

Table1

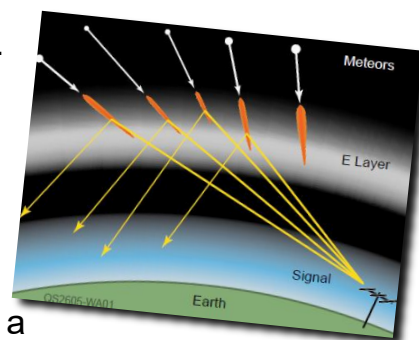
ARIETID 29 May – 19 June it peak 7 June.
 PERSEIDS 23 July -20 Aug peaking 12 Aug.
 GEMINID 4-16 Dec peaking 13 th Dec. ORIONID 2
 Oct – 7 Nov peaking 20 October and GEMINI Ple
 and WJST-X. Using WJST plenty of contacts
 using Meteor scatter

P94 What was in QST in June 1978. Well now here is a copy
 from our library of magazines. The main article was a
 Linear Loaded 20 Meter Beam.

P98 Classic Radio. The Clark County in Ohio amateur radio Association decided to build
 a historical Museum display to let people see a permanent display of wireless
 equipment from long ago history. A working Spak gap transmitter was also displayed.

P100 100, 50, 25 years ago in QST. Indexed.

Advertisements to the last page.
 Cheers Craig VK3KG.



Silicon Chip Review May 2026

P3 Editorial Viewpoint. Nicholas Vinen. Subscription rates and PDFs
 of Practical Electronics.

P16 Analog Computers. David VK3DSM. Looks at the beginnings to
 present rise of the computer, in this case the analog device. What
 it is and what it was used for. A great pictorial history of the
 various manufacturers and the uses they were built for.

P30 Power Amplifier Clipping Indicator. John Clark. A circuit and PCB
 for protecting your loudspeaker system. I monitors the amplifier
 output and when it detects amplifier output clipping can reduce the input
 to the amplifier. Full build and PCB layout ready to construct.

P40 Electronex 2026. Directory of companies appearing at the show June 3-4 2026.

P62 LC Meter. Andrew Woodfield. An LC meter consisting of 20 parts, <10pF to 1uF, as
 well as <10nH to 100mH, runs on a single AA cell. The
 theory and practice of this simple device using an ATtiny85 and 128x32 screen.

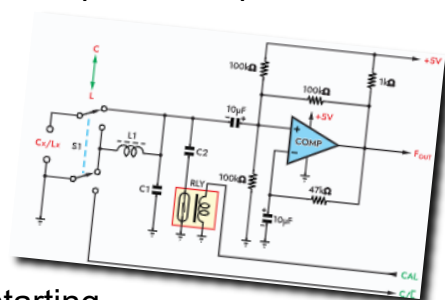
P69 WiFi Alarm Monitor. Kenneth Horton. An alarm module
 that signals an emergency via a Raspberry Pi and SMS
 texting.

P76 Power Electronics. Part 7. Resonant converters and
 soft switching. Using electronics to produce starting
 characteristics suitable for modern high power electronics.

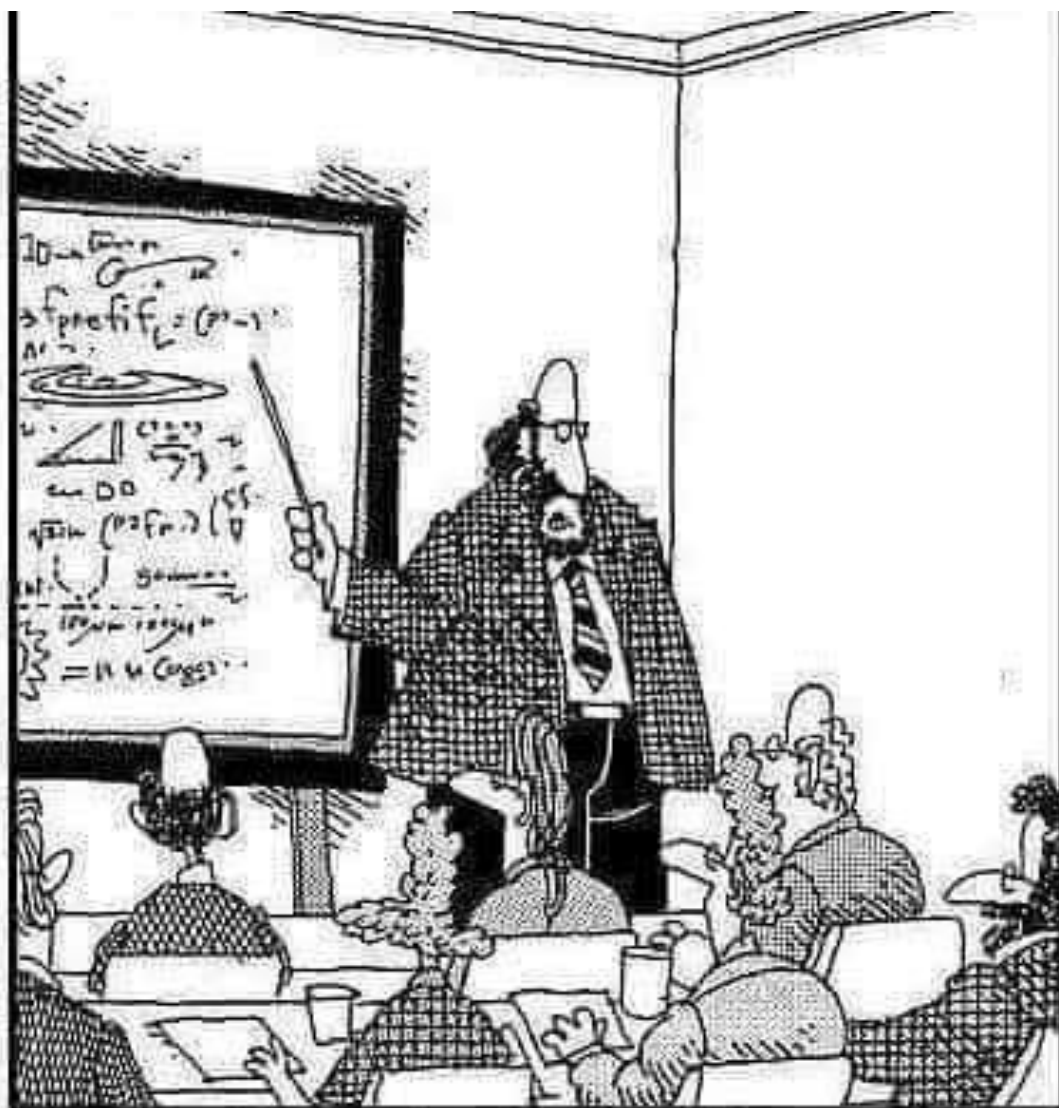
P82 Installing a Hidden CB Radio in your Car. Julian Edgar.
 Exercising stealth to install your radio in a modern car

P84 microDCC Decoder. Tim Blythman. Making the existing
 decoder even smaller and adding more features.

P90 BrisbaneSilicon ELM11 Microcontroller Board. Tim
 Blythman. Looks at this development board, the language
 Lua and some sample code.



- P94 Circuit Notebook. SOT-223 adaptor for amplifier VAS transistors. Automatic Level Crossing Controller for model railway. Simple battery charging using relay and lamp.
- P98 Serviceman's Log. Computer, Hisense power board, IR sensor.
- P104 Vintage Radio. Prof Graham Parslow. Airzone 6552A Concert Star from 1947. An Australian post war set, five valves, restoration.



"Along with 'Antimatter,' and 'Dark Matter,' we've recently discovered the existence of 'Doesn't Matter,' which appears to have no effect on the universe whatsoever."



Ballarat Amateur Radio Group Inc
Registration Number A0006953T
ABN 44 247 200 143
Application for Club Membership

This completed document can be emailed to the Secretary at BARG@BARG.ORG.AU, or brought along to a face to face meeting.

Surname: _____ **Given Names:** _____

Callsign: _____

Are you a financial member of WIA?: Yes No (Required for Insurance purposes)

Partner's Name: _____

Residential Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Postal Address: _____
(If different to above)

Telephone:
(Work) _____ (Home) _____ (Mobile) _____

Email Address _____

Newsletters and Club information will be sent to your email address. If you require Special Club notices and Newsletters to be delivered by Australia Post to your mailing address, this will attract an additional cost of \$30 per annum.

If the Club decides to publish a Club Directory, are you willing to have your Given name, callsign and telephone number? Please indicate: Yes No

By applying for membership I indicate my support of the purposes of the Association and agree to comply with the Association rules and any supplementary rules in effect.

Applicant's Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Proposed By: _____ **Callsign:** _____ **Date:** _____

Seconded By: _____ **Callsign:** _____ **Date:** _____

--ooOOoo--

Presented to Committee: _____ **Decision:** Accept / Reject

Fee Paid: \$ _____ **Date:** _____ **Receipt No. (if applicable:)** _____

Entered into Membership Register: _____ **Secretary:** _____